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ABSTRACT

This document contains Modules 6 and 7 of a series designed to familiarize users with Oregon minimum standards for public schools. Both modules focus on graduation requirements and each module begins with a performance indicator that indicates the important information and competencies to be taught in the module. Both supply study guides to structure the use of each module and explain the reasons for completing each part. The purpose of Module 6 is to explain the use of "Graduation Requirements, Guidelines, Revised," a 1977 Oregon State Department of Education publication that explains state graduation requirements. It does so by providing learning activities that require reference to the publication. Module 7 focuses on the minimum competency requirements for graduation. It attempts to explain the relationship between goals, competencies, performance indicators, measures, and standards. It provides lists of questions and answers and an assessment model. A quiz attempts to verify that desired learning module outcomes have been met. (JM)

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GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

MODULE 6: OVERVIEW

GOAL

Readers will be able to use the Graduation Requirements Guidelines, Revised* in implementing the new requirements in their local districts.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Upon completion of this learning module, you will be able to use the Graduation Requirements Guidelines, Revised as a reference to answer a series of questions regarding the new requirements.

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* Graduation Requirements Guidelines, Revised. Salem, OR: Oregon Department of Education, 1977.

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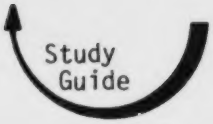


What?	Why?
1. Read the Introduction to the Graduation Requirements Guidelines, Revised, pages 1-5.	1. To see the "big picture" of the graduation requirements -- their development and historical progress.
2. Refer to the guidelines' Table of Contents.	2. To see how the guidelines are organized.
3. Do the learning activity in this module, page 4.	3. To answer key questions regarding the new graduation requirements.
4. Refer to the performance indicator for this module, page 1.	4. To determine whether you feel you are able to meet the outcomes expected of you for this module.

INSTRUCTIONS

Use the Graduation Requirements Guidelines, Revised to answer the questions below. Note that just below each question is indicated the location of the answer in the guide. After answering the questions, check the answer sheet on page 6.

1. Models used in the original graduation requirements guidelines were based on prior judgements of educators. Models used in the revised editions are based on _____
_____
(Introduction)

2. In addition to the traditional classroom instruction, local districts may provide students the opportunity to earn credit through such activities as _____
_____
(Chapter 1)

3. List three beneficial uses of planned course statements:

a. _____
b. _____
c. _____
(Chapter 2)

4. Planned course statements are required for all courses in grades 9-12. A number of districts, however, have developed statements for courses below the ninth grade. True or False. (Chapter 2)

5. Other than the course title, a planned course statements must include:
(a) _____ (b)_____
(c) _____.
(Chapter 2)

6. Local districts must provide opportunities for students to complete high school requirements in less than four years. True or False. (Chapter 3)

7. For the class of 1978, districts must certify student demonstrations of minimum competencies in these areas:_____
_____
_____
(Chapter 4)

8. Writing competencies as the application of skills and knowledge to life-role situations should lead to __(longer/shorter)__ lists of competencies, thus leading to __(more/less)__ time necessary for record-keeping. (Chapter 4)

9. Circle the competency statements which are written as application of skills and knowledge to life-role situations. The student will be able to:

   a. apply basic reading skills to obtain information, ideas and directions in everyday situations.
   b. add whole numbers and decimals with 80% accuracy.
   c. apply basic computational skills in solving problems commonly encountered in society.
   d. score at 8th grade reading level on the Stanford Achievement Test.
   e. assess one's aptitudes and interests related to the world of work.

10. In order to receive a diploma, a student must meet three requirements:

    a. _____
    b. _____
    c. _____
    (Chapter 5)

11. For students not qualifying to receive a diploma, the district must provide a Certificate of Competency. True or False. (Chapter 5)

12. The intent of Administrative Rule 581-22-222 was to assure that instruction leading to student attainment of the competency requirements for graduation would be coordinated throughout elementary and secondary education. True or False. (Chapter 6)

13. A key to successful elementary-secondary articulation of instruction is:

    _____
    _____
    _____
    (Chapter 6)

ANSWERS

1. Successful practices and materials developed in local districts.

2. Independent study, off campus experiences, credit by examination, dual enrollment.

3. a. Informing students of course requirements and content.
   b Communicating with parents and community.
   c. Basis for curriculum planning, or instructional guidelines for teachers.

4. True.

5. Content overview, course goals, minimum competencies (if available).

6. False. Local districts may provide these opportunities.

7. Reading, speaking, listening, writing, analyzing, computing.

8. Shorter, less.

9. a. Correct. Read (OAR 581-22-231 [a])
   c. Correct. Compute (OAR 581-22-231 [c])
   e. Correct Function within an occupation or continue education leading to a career. (OAR 581-22-231 [j])

   Items b and d are incorrect. They are not written as application of skills and knowledge to life-role situations.

10. a. units of credit
    b. attendance
    c. minimum competencies

11. False. Local districts may provide a Certificate of Competency.

12. True. See pp. 93-94.

13. Cooperative planning by elementary and secondary staff members.

GOAL

Readers will know the relationship between goals, competencies, performance indicators, measures and standards.

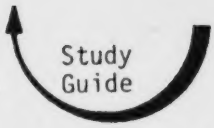
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Upon completion of this learning module you will be able to:

1. distinguish between goals, competencies, performance indicators, measures and standards;

2. identify from a list of outcome statements from local districts those statements which satisfy the definition of competency contained in the Elementary-Secondary Guide, Part I.*

* Elementary-Secondary Guide for Oregon Schools: Part I, Minimum Standards for Public Schools. Salem, Oregon: Oregon Department of Education, 1976.



What?	Why?
1. Read the definition of competency and performance indicator in the definitions section in Part I, pages 5 and 6.	1. To clarify the difference between competencies and performance indicators as adopted by the State Board.
2. Read "Relationship between Goals and Competencies," page 3 in this module.	2. To gain an overview of how goals and competencies relate to each other.
3. Read "Some Questions and Answers," pages 4-7 in this module.	3. To answer key questions concerning competency requirements in the minimum standards.
4. Study "Components Necessary for Assessment," page 8 in this module.	4. To provide an illustration of necessary components.
5. Study the illustration of a competency statement, performance indicators, measures and standards, page 9 in this module.	5. To provide a practical illustration of a competency, performance indicator, measure and standard.
6. Refer to the performance indicators for this module, page 1.	6. To determine whether you feel you are able to meet the outcomes expected of you for this module.
7. Complete the Quiz on page 11.	7. To give you practice in identifying competency statements and related performance indicators.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOALS AND COMPETENCIES*

By the minimum standards definition, a competency is a "statement of desired student performance representing demonstrable ability to apply knowledge, understanding, and/or skills assumed to contribute to success in life role functions." Hence, like a goal, a competency must be stated as a learner outcome and identify a desirable outcome of education. Once again, education is regarded as the combined effect of both schooling and community experiences. Also, similar to goals, competencies provide the framework for planning and assessment. The district should consider involving the community in the competency setting process.

The definitions of goals and competencies reveal that, despite their similarities, there is one distinct difference between goals and competencies. Goals can be written in relation to either the acquisition or application of knowledge, understanding or skill. Competencies, on the other hand, must always be written in terms of the application of knowledge, understanding or skill to life role functioning. Consequently, all competencies may also be goals, but not all goals may be competencies. For example, the following competency may also be a goal:

> The student is able to apply measuring skills to the solution of common problems around the home.

However, the following course goal is not a competency since it is stated at the knowledge level:

> The student knows the formulas for computing the surface area of objects, rooms, buildings, and parcels of land.

A minimum graduation competency may relate to only one district, program, or course goal, or it may relate to many goals. An individual competency can, and frequently will, relate to goals at various levels. Regardless of the pattern relating goals and competencies, it is imperative that goals and competencies be logically consistent and mutually supportive. The achievement of district, program and course goals should insure the attainment of minimum graduation competencies.

According to the Minimum Standard on Performance Requirements for Program Completion (OAR 581-22-231), "the local board shall by 9-1-76 adopt and make available to the community minimum competencies it is willing to accept as evidence (that) students are equipped to function in the society in which they live." In addition, the Local District Responsibility for Implementation Standard (OAR 581-22-236) mandates that local districts enrolling students in grades 9 through 12 must be capable of certifying the attainment of minimum competencies for specified areas beginning with the graduating class of 1978. The certification of all competency areas must begin not later than with the graduating class of 1981.

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* Writing District, Program and Course Goals. Salem, OR: Oregon Department of Education, 1977. Page 29.

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
Concerning Competency Requirements in the Minimum Standards

WHAT IS A "MINIMUM COMPETENCY" AS THE TERM IS USED IN THE MINIMUM STANDARDS?

The Elementary-Secondary Guide, Part I defines a competency as "a statement of desired student performance representing demonstrable ability to apply knowledge, understanding and/or skills assumed to contribute to success in life role functions."

The state has required that each school system identify and clarify the minimum competencies expected of every graduate in terms of post-schooling capacities to carry on the functions of living. It must also establish and certify that each student demonstrates evidence of those capacities as a condition for receiving a diploma.

WHY HAVE SUCH A REQUIREMENT?

- To assure that the school, parents, students and community have a mutual understanding about the school's role in preparing young people to cope with the functions of living.
- To establish the school's responsibility for helping the individual apply, as well as develop, certain basic skills.
- To focus one component of the curriculum planner's thinking on the post-schooling needs and expectations of young people.

HOW IS THIS DIFFERENT FROM TRADITIONAL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS?

The difference is that the new standards require that students demonstrate their ability to apply what they have learned. Most of the knowledge and skills traditionally needed to pass their courses still provide the foundation. Each district's competency requirements should specify the ways in which students must show that they can apply this foundation in meeting the demands of daily life. It might help to think of the competencies as a set of outcome measures, or checkpoints, which help indicate how successful the educational program has been for each individual student.

DOESN'T THAT MAKE THIS RULE A KIND OF ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENT?

Yes. Schools assess a child's readiness to enter formal schooling and place the child with the proper textbooks, teacher, program, or working group. In addition, schools continously assess the student's progress throughout the school program as a means of diagnosing needs, problems, abilities, and interests as the basis for proper adjustment in curriculum, method, and materials. Finally, the school system assesses the student's readiness to leave school and to take the next steps beyond schooling.

AREN'T THINGS LIKE "THE ABILITY TO COMPUTE ACCURATELY" AND "WORD ATTACK SKILLS" "COMPETENCIES?"

No, they are not. Of course a wide variety of skills, knowledge and understanding are necessary to build competency in any given area. The majority of such "enabling" skills are programmed into the elementary school curriculum (OAR 581-22-222 makes this a requirement). These basics are critically important as students build toward the competencies they must demonstrate before they graduate, but these basic building blocks are not in themselves competencies.

IT MIGHT HELP IF YOU GAVE US SOME EXAMPLES OF COMPETENCIES WHICH FIT THE DEFINITION GIVEN IN THE STANDARDS!

Here are a few that have been used by some school districts in Oregon.

- The student will be able to write effectively to communicate information, ideas and directions in everyday situations.
- The student will be able to use listening skills to obtain information and ideas and to recognize the feelings of the speaker.
- The student will be able to apply the basic measuring skills in solving problems commonly encountered in society.

WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT MAINTAINING A CHECKING ACCOUNT OR INTERPRETING A RENTAL AGREEMENT?

Remember that competencies are like quality control checkpoints. There certainly is nothing "sacred" about these particular tasks. The important thing is that they are tasks which require students to apply their ability to read, compute, analyze, etc., in a way that relates to "real life" experiences. The people who wrote these particular competency statements must have felt that these were important areas to which student's school experiences should be applicable.

HOW DOES A SCHOOL OR COMMUNITY KNOW THAT THE COMPETENCIES STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO DEMONSTRATE FOR GRADUATION ARE, IN FACT, THE COMPETENCIES YOUNG PEOPLE NEED TO SUCCEED IN LIFE AFTER LEAVING SCHOOL?

No one can predict the future exactly. Our own best thinking is the best we can do. Competency requirements should be adopted by a local school board after extensive discussion with staff and citizens in the community. There are no "best" competencies. By watching graduates and reexamining the requirements, those most appropriate for a particular community and its cultural influences may be identified.

AREN'T THESE COMPETENCIES MORE DIFFICULT TO MEASURE THAN BASIC SKILLS LIKE THE ABILITY TO ADD SINGLE DIGIT NUMBERS?

Measuring competency is not as simple as administering a paper and pencil arithmetic test, that's true. In many cases certification of competence will be based upon the professional judgment of the classroom teacher. This is why the standards require districts to specify the kind of evidence which will be accepted as proof that competency has been reached. Careful specification of these performance indicators should help assure fair and uniform judgment and certification of competency from one individual student to another within your school district. In some cases, depending on how the competency is stated, ordinary test items may be useful. The most useful test items, however, will probably be of the kind known as "applied performance tests."

HOW MUCH TIME WILL BE REQUIRD OF TEACHERS TO KEEP THE RECORDS CALLED FOR IN THE NEW STANDARDS? IS RECORD KEEPING LIKELY TO INTERFERE WITH THE QUALITY OF TEACHING?

Teacher time for record keeping will vary depending on the extent of local measurement and the responsibility given to teachers for that task. The measurement should be seen as a part of instruction. An organized system should not take more time from instruction than it did before. Carefully done, it could help teachers identify more precisely the needs of individual students and to provide more effective instruction.

OUR DISTRICT DEVISED A LONG LIST OF MORE THAN A HUNDRED "COMPETENCIES," BUT MOST OF THEM ARE AT THE BASIC SKILL LEVEL AND DON'T FIT THE DEFINITION IN THE STANDARDS. IS ALL THIS EFFORT GOING TO BE WASTED.

It shouldn't be. Judging from what we have seen in many districts, the chances are that many of the goal statements you have called competencies may be used as performance indicators. If this is true, they may be collected into subgroups for which more general competency statements can be written. This reduction in the number of things to be certified should also simplify your record keeping system and reduce the number of things any given teacher will have to keep track of.

IS A SCHOOL RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING SPECIAL HELP TO STUDENTS WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY IN MEETING THE COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR GRADUATION?

Yes. It is the responsibility of the school to provide assistance to students who encounter difficulty in achieving required competencies in the regular classroom activities. A variety of ways of providing assistance have been observed throughout the state: teacher assistance available before and after the regular school day, tutoring by assigned staff members, summer session devote to competency development, competency centers within the school to which students can be assigned for special assistance.

TO WHAT EXTENT DO STUDENTS HAVE A CHOICE IN SELECTING THE COMPETENCIES THEY ARE TO DEMONSTRATE IN ORDER TO GRADUATE?

They have no choice. A requirement is just that, a requirement. Districts may, however, provide optional ways for students to demonstrate these requirements.

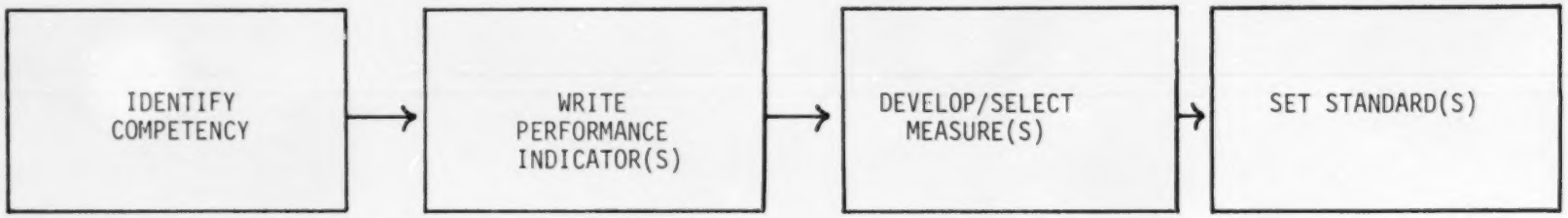
Districts may also waive some competencies in the face of unique circumstances. Any waivers granted must be noted on the appropriate transcripts.

MUST STUDENTS DEMONSTRATE ALL COMPETENCIES IN ORDER TO GRADUATE, OR CAN THEY GRADUATE IF ONE OR TWO ARE NOT MET TO EVERONE'S SATISFACTION?

All competencies must be met, unless the local school board has waived a competency under provisions of the standards.

COMPONENTS NECESSARY FOR ASSESSMENT

Our assessment model which illustrates the relationship between competencies, performance indicators, measures and standards.



- Statement of desired student performance representing demonstrable ability to apply knowledge, understanding and/or skills assumed to contribute to success in life role functions.

- Serves to clarify the intent of an outcome statement by specifying the kind(s) of behavior(s) which are to be measured in verifying achievement of the outcome.

- test items
- applied performance test
- observation schedule
- rating scale
- checklist

- how well
- how many
- what percent
- how often

Activity

ILLUSTRATION

Competency: The student is able to apply measuring and computing skills to the solution of common problems around the home.

SAMPLE

Performance Indicators	Measurement Options	Typical Standards
I. The student will determine the amount of materials needed to complete a home maintenance or improvement project.	A. Determine by measurement the area to be covered if you were to paint a room (your classroom, for example) and estimate from the label the amount of paint you would neet to apply two coats of paint. (Applied performance test) B. Determine by measurement the area to be covered in paneling one wall of a room (you may choose a wall of your classroom) containing least one window or doorway. Determine to the nearest whole number the number of 4'x 8' panels required for the job. (Applied performance test) C. Determine by measurement the area to be covered to carpet a room wall-to-wall (you may use your classroom) and calculate how many square yards of carpeting would be required. Be sure to include closets, flour space under counters, etc. Allow two square yards for trim wastage. (Applied performance test)	Competency Attainment Students must be checked off for two performance indicators. Performance Standards P.I. #1: Student may choose any two of the three performance measures. Measurements must be accurate to plus or minus 5 percent in each. Amounts of material must be accurate to the nearest whole number of the smallest typical unit (e.g., quarts of paint, sheets of formica, etc.)
II. The student will determine the cost of materials needed to complete a home maintenance or improvement project.	A. Given a list of unit prices for the materials needed for P.I. #1, calculate the total cost in each case. (Test item)	P.I. #1: Cost estimates must be accurate to the nearest whole dollar amount, assuring the correct quantity of material is determined in P.I. #1.

This is illustrative only. There may be other options for performance indicators and measures for this competency. If you have further questions, contact the Education Program Audit Division, Oregon Department of Education, (503) 378-3074.

Quiz

IDENTIFYING COMPETENCY STATEMENTS
AND
RELATED PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Listed below are three groups of outcome statements used by local districts. Identify with an "x" the one statement within each group which satisfies the definition of competency contained in the Elementary-Secondary Guide, Part I. The remaining two statements in each group may be used as performance indicators of the competency.

Group 1

____ a. The student can compute, applying the four basic operations (addition, subtraction, multiplication and division) to integers, fractions and decimal numbers.

____ b. The student is able to apply basic computation skills to everyday problems.

____ c. The student can understand and use equivalent forms of a number.

Group 2

____ a. The student can identify different modes of transportation.

____ b. The student can identify enforcement agencies pertaining to pedestrian and vehicular travel.

____ c. The student is able to function as a responsible individual on the streets and highways.

Group 3

____ a. The student possesses and is able to apply basic skills necessary to obtain and keep a job.

____ b. The student knows basic numerical skills necessary for a broad range of occupations.

____ c. The student knows basic oral and written communication skills necessary for a broad range of occupations.

Answers

Group 1--b

Group 2--c

Group 3--a

Rationale:

Group 1--only b is an application of skills to life-role situations; a and c are possession of mathematical skills or knowledge without application.

Group 2--only c requires the student to apply skills and knowledge functionally; a and b are recall types of knowledge.

Group 3--b and c require only the possession or knowledge of basic skills; a contains the necessary requirement to apply them--to obtain and keep a job.